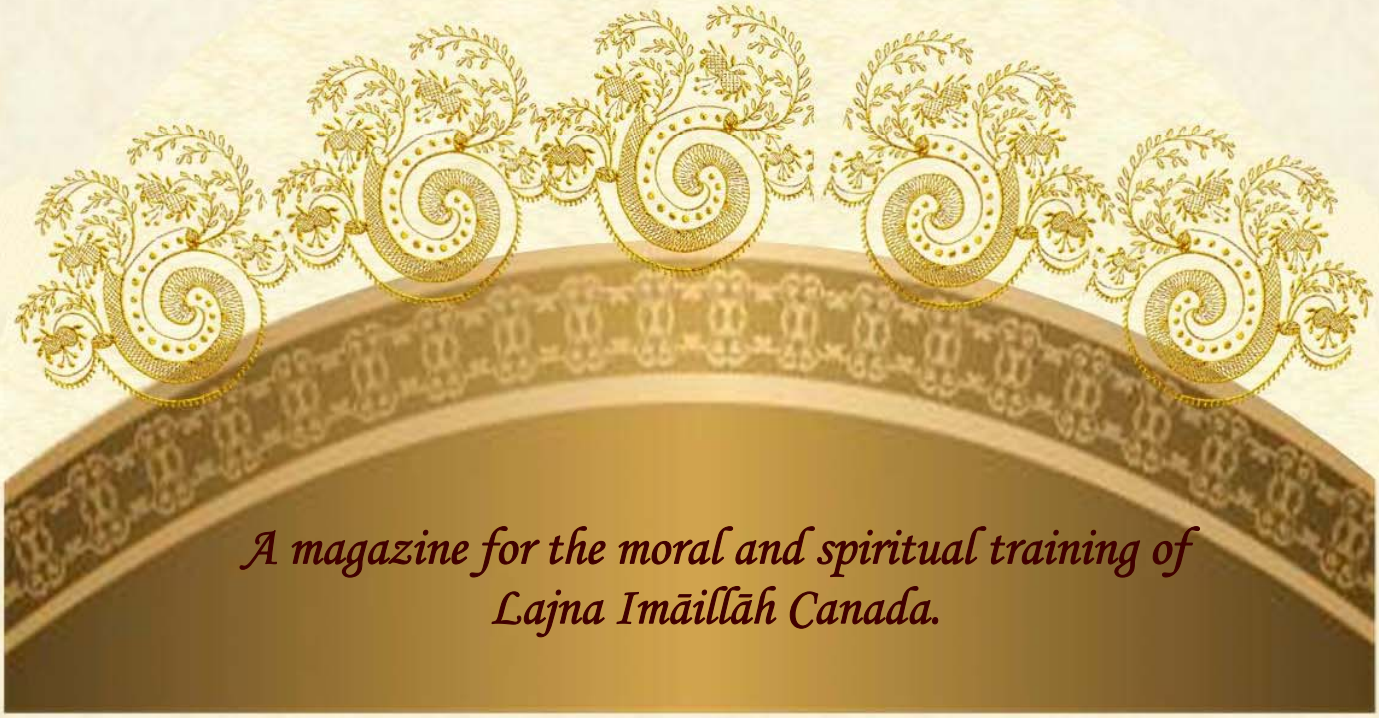
An-Nisaa'

Volume: 29 Issue: 1
January—April 2017

"If you were to reform fifty percent of women, then Islām will surely progress."
(Revelation vouchsafed upon Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd[ra])



A magazine for the moral and spiritual training of Lajna Imāillāh Canada.

Translation of Urdu Couplets of Promised Messiah[as]

Those who cultivate the habit of suspiciousness;
Deviate too far away from the path of righteousness.

Their tongue attacks recklessly;
In an instant, it earns the displeasure of the All-Knowing Lord.

By uttering one word, they nullify all their good deeds;
Thereafter they continue to sow the seeds of mischief.

These countrymen of ours have fallen in such deep sleep;
That they do not wake up though we tried to wake them hundreds of times.

All their limbs have become atrophied, rendering them so negligent;
All their power is concentrated in their sharp tongue.

Either they indulge in foul talk, or they think ill of others;
As for the rest, they are totally unaware of the plight of Islām.

Try not to think ill of a person even though you find him wicked;
Be fearful of the wrath of the Lord of the world.

Perhaps your own eyes might make a mistake;
Perhaps he is not bad who looks bad to you.

Maybe it is the fault of your understanding;
Maybe it is a trial from the Forgiving Lord.

As a result you courted spiritual death on account of your suspiciousness;
And incurred the wrath of the Holy God.

If you become so shameless in your audacity;
Don't you think the word *Ittiqa* (piety) would become meaningless?

Moses too suffered embarrassment because he doubted;
Read in the Holy Qur'ān what Khidr did.

Between God and His servants, there are hundreds of thousands of secrets;
Of which you know nothing, nor is their reality evident to you.

[Brahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Part V, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 21, pp. 18-19]

In the name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the ever Merciful!

Lajna Imāillāh Canada's

An-Nisaa'

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Volume: 29 Issue: 1
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From the Holy Qur'ān

The English translation of the Arabic verses is rendered by Maulvi Sher Ali Sāhib[ra].

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّقُوْلُ رَبَّنَآ اٰتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا
حَسَنَةً وَّ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَّ قِنَا
عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

And of them there are some who say: 'Our Lord, grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come, and protect us from the torment of the Fire.' (2:202)

اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيْبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوْا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

For these there shall be a *goodly* share because of what they have earned. And Allāh is swift at reckoning. (2:203)

Hadīth: Saying of the Holy Prophet[sa]

Difference Between an Active and an Inactive Muslim

Narrated by Hazrat Abū Hurairah, Allāh be pleased with him: The Prophet of Allāh (peace of Allāh be on him and His blessings) said:

"Whoso believed in Allāh and in His Prophet and established Prayer and observed fast in Ramaḍān, Allāh promises to admit him into Paradise whether he fights for His cause or sits in the garden house where he was born."

They (the companions) said: 'Should we then communicate these pleasant tidings to the people, O Prophet of Allāh?' The Prophet answered thus:

"There are a hundred grades in Paradise, prepared by Allāh for those who fight in the path of Allāh, and, in between each, is as great a distance as is between earth and heaven. So when you beg of Allāh, beg of Him the Firdaus: for, it is the most central Paradise and the highest one and aloft of it is the celestial seat of the Gracious God and therefrom spring the streams of Paradise."

(Bukhārī)

[Forty Gems of Beauty, page 45, Hadīth No. 7]

Editorial Note

"Let it be crystal clear that in no respect is a woman's status less than that of a man." – Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa]

The above mentioned quote is taken from the address delivered by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (May Allāh be his Helper), at the occasion of Wāqifāt Nau's Ijtimā' held at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London on February 25, 2017. During his address, our beloved Huzoor[aa] spoke in detail about the rights of women and their high status in Islām. Huzoor[aa] mentioned that the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) encouraged the pursuit of secular and religious knowledge amongst Ahmadī Muslim women. Hence, Ahmadī Muslim girls are excelling in education and even surpassing boys in many countries. Huzoor[aa] further said:

> **"Thus, women who have the capacity to become doctors or teachers or to pursue other professions which are of benefit to humanity can do so. However, at the same time, they should not ignore their duties to their children and to their families. Such women should manage their time effectively and ensure that their children are not neglected in any way."**

While referring to those women who do not go out to work professionally, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa] said:

> **"Those girls who are well-educated, but who do not go out to work professionally, should never bear any form of inferiority complex or feel embarrassed or as though they are wasting their talents. The truth is that looking after your homes, and caring for and raising your children, is of profound importance and of priceless value."**

(Source: Press Release published on Feb. 28, 2017 on www.https://www.khalifaofislam.com/)

Though the audience of these valuable words were Wāqifāt Nau, they are a source of guidance for us all. In light of these words, nothing more needs to be said!

Keeping on the same note, the current issue of An-Nisaa' is focused on the theme of Tarbiyat from the perspective of women as mothers and founders of the future. I hope you will enjoy reading a variety of articles which touch upon various aspects of Tarbiyat. I would like to thank all those who took time to write for An-Nisaa' and submitted essays, poems, recipes and other materials for publication. Please continue to send your original written work, and also provide your feedback for continuous improvement.

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"Remember that the key for any nation to thrive and progress lies in the hands of the mothers of that nation."
Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa]

Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah[as]

The following excerpts are taken from The Essence of Islām: Volume II, pg. 359 - 361; 363 - 364 (available online at www.alislam.org/books); a compilation of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah[as], translated into English by Hazrat Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra] and revised by Munawar Ahmad Sa`eed .

Thinking Ill of Others

The habit of suspiciousness and thinking ill of others is an affliction which makes a person blind and plunges him into the dark pit of ruin. It is this unfortunate trait which brought about the worship of a dead human being. It is the same trait which alienates people from the Divine attributes of creation, mercy, providence, etc., reducing God to a useless entity—God forbid. It would be no exaggeration to state that it is in consequence of this habit that the greater part, indeed the whole, of hell will be filled. Those who think ill of the Commissioned ones of God Almighty scorn His bounties and His grace. [Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 100]

The habit of thinking ill is a great curse which consumes faith as quickly as blazing fire consumes tinder. God becomes the enemy of him who thinks ill of God's Messengers and He stands up to fight him. He entertains such jealousy on behalf of His chosen ones, as has no equal. When I was attacked in diverse ways, the same jealousy of God was roused on my behalf. [Al-Wasiyyat, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 20, p. 317, footnote]

I tell you truly that the habit of thinking ill of others is a great affliction, which destroys a person's faith, flings him away from truth and rectitude, and turns friends into enemies. In order to acquire the excellences of the truthful it is necessary that a person should altogether shun the habit of thinking ill of others, and should he happen to fall into that attitude concerning someone else he should seek forgiveness repeatedly and should supplicate God Almighty that he may be safeguarded against such sinfulness and the consequences that flow from it. This habit should not be underrated. It is a dangerous disease which destroys a person very quickly.

In short, thinking ill of another ruins a person. It is written that when those who are condemned to hell are brought face to face with it God Almighty would say to them: You had become guilty of thinking ill of God. [Malfūzāt, vol. I, p. 372]

The mischief starts when a person indulges in false suspicions and doubts. If a person thinks well in every situation, he is bestowed the capacity to achieve good. A mistake at the very start makes it difficult to reach the goal. Thinking ill of another is a great vice which deprives a person of many opportunities of doing good and which goes on mounting till a person begins to think ill of God Almighty. [Malfūzāt, vol. II, p. 107]

Forms of Arrogance and Means of Purification

It is easy for a person to discard the principal vices, but some vices are so subtle and hidden that one is not normally conscious of them, and even when one becomes conscious of them it is difficult to discard them. For instance, typhoid which is a severe illness and a high fever can be treated immediately with appropriate remedies, but tuberculosis which works its mischief out of sight is very difficult of treatment. Such are these subtle and hidden vices which keep a

person from achieving exalted ranks. They are moral vices which cause disruption in social life. Slight differences generate rancour, hatred, jealousy, hypocrisy and arrogance and a brother begins to look down upon a brother. If a person observes Salāt properly for a few days and people praise him, he falls a victim to showing off, pride and self-esteem and loses that sincerity which is the true purpose of worship. If Allāh, the Glorious, bestows wealth, knowledge, high family status or honour on a person he begins to look down upon a brother who does not enjoy those advantages. If through obstinacy or enmity a person's relations with a brother are embittered he devotes himself day and night to finding fault with his brother or carries tales against him to someone in authority so that by winning the favour of the latter he might replace his brother in some office held by him, while he himself suffers from all those faults. Such are the subtle vices which are difficult to discard. Arrogance is one of them and is manifested in diverse forms. The divines suffer from it in respect of their knowledge. They are occupied all the time in finding fault with each other at the intellectual level so as to humiliate each other and to bring each other into contempt. It is very difficult to get rid of such subtle vices, but they are not tolerable under Divine law. It is not only the common people who are afflicted with them but also those who shun well known vices and are esteemed as divines and scholars and people of high degree. Deliverance from these subtle vices is like undergoing a sort of death. Until a person is delivered from the darkness of such vices he cannot achieve complete purity of soul and cannot become worthy of those bounties and excellence that are bestowed by God Almighty on purification of the soul. Some people deem themselves as having been delivered from such moral vices, but when they are confronted with another person they are greatly roused and are not able to suppress their high notion of self-esteem and their arrogance and exhibit such a low quality of morals of which they themselves had no conception. It is at such times that it is known that they have found no deliverance from such vices and have not yet achieved any good, and that they are still far short of that purification of the soul, which is a characteristic of the righteous and is a sign of true excellence. This shows that moral purification is very difficult and cannot be achieved without the grace of Allāh, the Glorious. Such grace is also attained through the three means that have just been mentioned, namely, first, striving and planning; secondly, Prayer and supplication; and thirdly, keeping company with the righteous. [Speeches, pp. 17-18]

Arrogance is an affliction that constantly affects man. Keep in mind that arrogance comes from Satan and converts an arrogant one into Satan. Until a person turns wholly away from the path of arrogance he is not enabled to accept the truth and does not become worthy of receiving Divine grace, inasmuch as arrogance bars his way. So shun every type of arrogance, whether generated by learning, wealth, status, caste, family or noble descent. These are the factors that give birth to arrogance. Until a person purifies himself of all such pride he cannot win Divine approval and become a chosen one of God. He is not bestowed such comprehension of the Divine as totally consumes the passions of self. Such pride is characteristic of Satan and is displeasing to God. Satan manifested such pride, conceived that he was better than Adam and claimed:

'I am better than he. Thou hast created me of fire and him hast Thou created of clay.' (38:77)

The result was that he was rejected and expelled from the presence of God. [Speeches, p. 19]

Arrogance and mischief are evil. A slight mistake might destroy all the good achieved over a period of seventy long years. It is written of a holy man who dwelt in a mountain where no rain had fallen over a long period, that one day when rain fell over stones and rocks also, he felt that rain was needed by fields and gardens and that much of it which had fallen on stones and rocks had been wasted. It would have

(Continued on page 19)

Summary of Friday Sermon
Striving for Moral Excellence: The Islāmic Teachings

On the pretext of freedom and fashion, nudity is becoming commonplace among men and women in this age. It is considered to be a sign of coming from a developed nation to publicly display nudity.

Every Ahmadī boy and girl, man and woman, should try to raise standards of their modesty and piety and protect themselves against depravity in society.

In the name of freedom of speech and conscience, anti-Islām forces are bent upon eliminating Islāmic teachings and values from Islāmic society.

Source: Friday Sermon Archives from www.alislam.org; English Summary by Wakīl A'lā

On January 13, 2017, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (May Allāh be his Helper) delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (May Allāh be his Helper) said: Some people believe that religion and Faith restrict their freedom and impose constraints on them. In this regard God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān "….and has laid no hardship upon you in religion..." (22:79). Rather, the purpose of the Sharī'ah is to lessen burdens on them and protect them from all kinds of afflictions and dangers. Hence, Divine word has clarified that there is not even a single precept in Islāmic teachings as is meant to impose hardship on a person. Instead, every commandment is a source of mercy and blessings for him. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: On the pretext of freedom and fashion, nudity is becoming commonplace among men and women in this age. It is considered to be a sign of coming from a developed nation to publicly display nudity. This evidently is affecting our own children as well to some extent. Some [Ahmadī] girls write to me and ask why purdah is important in Islām and why they cannot go out without wearing a coat or a burqa. The first thing to be remembered in this regard is that if we wish to remain firm in our faith, it will be necessary for us to act upon all the commandments of the Almighty God and His Prophet[sa] . The Holy Prophet[sa] said that modesty is part of Faith. Therefore, to wear a modest dress and observe purdah are necessary if we intend to protect our faith. Hence, every Ahmadī boy and girl, man and woman, should try to raise the level of their piety and purdah and protect themselves from immorality in society. It is for the parents, and especially for the mothers, to make their children aware of Islāmic teachings and the evils prevalent in society. Only then will our coming generations remain firm in their faith and will be protected against the venom of the so-called developed world. Speaking about a letter which an Ahmadī girl wrote to him regarding purdah and working in a bank, Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: Women who are doctors or are concerned with some research work are at times faced with genuine problems. They cannot work wearing traditional burqa or hijāb. One example of this can be when

they are in the operating theatre. But, even then their dress is such that they are almost properly covered wearing loose-fitting, baggy garments. Moreover, even doctors can work in hijāb. In Rabwah, Dr. Fahmida Munir Sāhiba and Dr. Nusrat Jahan Sāhiba used to observe proper purdah; rather they were quite strict in the observance of purdah. No one was able to raise an objection against them. Nor were their professional duties affected by their observance of purdah. When one's intention is good, one can find numerous ways to truly practice one's Faith. So, even if one does not cover oneself [for some reason] at one's place of work, one should do so immediately after coming out of it. Working in a bank is not a service to humanity as such. So, while working at such places, one cannot be allowed to remove hijāb, especially when one is wearing fashionable clothes and has put on make-up. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) mentioned the lawsuit that was filed in Switzerland by a girl seeking permission to swim separately from boys, and said: At this, human rights organizations, which are generally very vocal about personal freedoms, said that though it was her personal right, it was not such a significant issue that a verdict should have been given in her favor. Hence, when it comes to Islāmic teachings and modest behavior among women, human rights organizations come up with so many excuses [to avoid a just opinion]. Under these circumstances, Ahmadīs have to be even more careful. In the schools where swimming is compulsory, young girls should swim wearing burkinis, so that they know that they are required to dress modestly. Parents should also make children realize that boys and girls have to swim separately. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: In the name of freedom of speech and expression, anti-Islām forces are bent upon eliminating Islāmic teachings and values from Islāmic society. These people are striving to eliminate religion in the name of freedom of speech and expression in such a manner that no one can accuse them of resorting to compulsion and thus they are seen as sympathizers. Islām is not a religion that imposes unreasonable restrictions on its followers. Rather, depending on the situation its teachings have an aspect of flexibility about it. For instance, there is no restriction of purdah for a doctor or a patient. To save human life and help it out of pain is the supreme purpose. Similarly, permission has been granted even to eat carrion and pork to the extent to which one needs them for one's survival. But the way satanic forces want us to behave their purpose is to eliminate Faith for good. Therefore, it is we Ahmadīs who need to wage a jihad against this. [It is, however, to be remembered that] in the time of the Promised Messiah[as], there is no jihad of sword. This is the time for jihad of reforming the self. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: I wish to particularly address the Muslims living in the developed world and generally the Ahmadī Muslims living in every part of the world that they should strive to reach the pinnacle of loyalty to their country making sacrifices for it and contributing the best they can towards its progress and prosperity. When this happens, the mouths of satanic forces will themselves become shut, for they will realize that Muslims are true supporters of their country and nation. If we voluntarily impose some religious restrictions upon ourselves, the worldly courts have no right to interfere in this matter. Such interference will only create restlessness and rifts between the local population and refugees. However, if someone is involved in harming the country or is disloyal to it or is spreading misinformation and hatred, then the governments are justified in apprehending such elements and punish them. But the state has no right to bar someone from acting upon the teaching of one's religion and accuse him of being unable to integrate in society. We, Ahmadī Muslims, must remember that if our men and women and our youth do not strive to uphold our religious values, there will be no guarantee of our survival. We will become worthy of a more severe punishment from God, for we understood the truth but failed to act upon it.

The developed nations have touched the peak of their progress, but now their moral degradation and immoral acts are leading them to decline. Hence, under these circumstances, instead of dyeing ourselves in their complexion, our job is to sympathize with them on humanitarian grounds and lead them to the right path. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: It is sad that some people go so far as to ask if purdah is the only thing necessary for the progress of Islām and Ahmadiyyat. Some say purdah is a backward trend. I would like to say that if we want to conquer the world, we will have to abandon such thinking. Those who raise such questions should know that if they keep following the worldly-minded people and spend their lives like them, they will lose themselves in worldly pursuits. Piety and Faith will then be visible only in name and gradually this too will no longer be the case. Hence, none of the Divine commandments should be taken for granted. One should rather fear Allāh in this regard. Islām needs for its progress every single commandment issued by God and His prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. The restriction of purdah is not meant for women alone; rather men and women both have been commanded to observe it. God commanded the believing men to restrain their eyes, because it is necessary for the obtainment of purity. Hence, before God went on to command women to observe purdah, He first commanded men to keep away from every such thing as might stir carnal passions in them. To ogle at women and get mixed up with them, to watch nude films and to chat, either through Facebook or some other means, with people one is not permitted to talk to, makes life impure. While explaining the restraining of the eyes, the Promised Messiah[as] said: 'Casting restraint eyes on forbidden things and saving yourselves (from possible slip) and seeing other permissible things is called 'the restraining of the eyes' in Arabic...One should safeguard all such holes in one's body through which vice can enter the body. The term, 'hole', covers the sexual organs as well the ears, nose and mouth'. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: Some women raise the objection that if they cover their face, their make-up gets spoiled. I would like to clarify that if they do not put on make-up, they can keep their faces uncovered down to the mouth, but if they have put on make-up, then they must cover their face. They should decide whether they want to act upon the commandments of the Almighty God and hide their beauty or want to show to the world their beauty and make-up. The Holy Qur'ān provides details of the people before whom a woman can demonstrate her beauty. Secondly, the beauty that itself becomes evident, such as the face and height, etc., they surely cannot remain hidden. Here, I would also say to the Ahmadī missionaries and their wives that they too should be careful regarding their dress and the safeguarding of their eyes. The wife of a missionary is also like a missionary. She should also show her best example in all aspects of life. May God enable our men and women both to follow all Islāmic injunctions to perfection! Āmīn

The restriction of purdah is not meant for women alone; rather men and women both have been commanded to observe it. God commanded the believing men to restrain their eyes, because it is necessary for the obtainment of purity.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V (May Allāh be his Helper)

Building a Strong Bond with your Children in Today's World

By: Saadia Mahdi, Peace Village East

Are we living in the Age of Communication or in the Age of Distractions?

There was a time, when people were poor yet they had time. They had time to spend with their loved ones. Their communication was not virtual but real. But today we see a very different world.

Technology has made unimaginable advances over the past few decades that the world is now virtually a "Global Village" and small handheld devices allow anyone to communicate with others all over the world. These programs and apps are no doubt making our lives easier but with each new era, there are a new set of challenges and problems. These days, both parents and children are so involved in their phones, laptops, social media sites, whatsapp messages, skype phone calls, etc. etc. etc. that they are missing out on life.

Before the Internet existed (I know that sounds like a long long time ago, but surprisingly it's not that far back) parents only worried when their children were away from home, but once they returned they were now safe within the four walls of the house and there were very few distractions. Nowadays, these same devices that are seen as blessings of the modern age are coming in between husbands and wives; parents and children; and contributing to an even greater communication gap than ever before.

Traditionally, (either back in Pakistan, or even here) families lived paycheque to paycheque. You bought what you could afford and there was no need to compete with others to have bigger and better things. But with the availability of credit cards and mortgages, too many of us started to live well beyond our means and that definitely meant working longer hours, working multiple jobs, both parents working, not to mention the added stress of living in debt.

One can say, that I do all of this for my children's love, health and welfare. Is there any harm in giving my kids the things that I never had? I do all this hard work so that they could enjoy their lives comfortably and enjoy life's perks. I totally get it and I am sure that Allāh will reward you in the best way, for your good intentions. But you are missing a key point here. No matter who the child is or who their parent is, there is no doubt that the one thing children want and need more than anything is their parents love. The problem is we are trying to express our love in material things but kids are not deprived of things, they are deprived of your attention. Quality time spent together in a peaceful house is the best thing a parent could give their child and that is the only thing we should be striving for.

Parenting expert Alyson Schafer states that the two most important times that a child needs the undivided attention of their parent (primarily moms) is:

When they return home after a significant period of time, for example coming home after school.

And before they go to bed.

It is at these two periods in the day, that children will 'bank' in the love and affection their mother gives them, they will release their stress from the day, they will be more likely to discuss any issues they might have faced or trouble they might be having at school. They will also be more open to talking and having a real conversation with you. Unfortunately, it is usually when children come home from school that their moms are either at work or busy in other tasks. Scenario one is if you are a stay at home mom; be mindful that you give your full attention to your kids at these two times. When it is home time, try to be done your cooking or cleaning, put your phone away and give your children your full and undivided attention.

If you are a working mom, and it is not possible for you to be home at the time the children come home, then when you return home is the time that applies as this is the time they see you after an extended period of time. Same rules apply, try not to do anything before you have given them their well-deserved attention, this could just be a few minutes but you will know when they are ok for you to move on to another task.

If you have more than one child then each of them does not need separate time or a separate place. They just want you to be present, open to talk and listen.

Another tradition that is slowly fading away is the family dinner. As everyone is so busy, nobody has time to sit together and eat and this is a big problem. Family dinners serve as sort of a 'check-in'; where the parents discuss important topics with their children, and where children get to talk about their projects and tasks and everyone gets updated on each other. This is a simple thing to implement but it is so important in strengthening familial bonds.

"Of all the skills we need to raise respectful children in this disrespectful world, the skill of listening outweighs all the rest."

(Jill Rigby, "Raising Respectful Children in a Disrespectful World, pg 180)

Actions Speak Louder than Words

We've all heard this saying and nowhere is it more important than in parenting a child. Children will do as you do, not as you say. If we tell them to tell the truth, but will lie in our day to day lives then we have actually taught them how to lie. All parents will agree that they don't lie and always tell the truth, but think of those instances when it is easy to lie to your child than to figure out the proper way to handle a situation. For example, your child asks for a cookie or sweet and you know that dinner is almost ready. If you say no, your child will be upset and you would rather not deal with that right now. So it is easy to say "The cookies are finished". The child will take that as the truth as his mom has told him so. Later on, when they find the box of cookies, they will right away know that you lied to them, and learn that it is ok to lie in certain situations. This also applies to hiding things from your children. You might not lie about the fact that you have goodies and snacks in the house, but you will hide them so that they are not eating them when you don't want them to. This teaches children that they too can hide things from you that could be things or information, because they aren't ready for you to know. The more open and honest you are with your kids, the more open and honest they will be with you. The more you respect your children, the more they will respect you. Act the way you want them to act, kids are great at copying you, they will follow the example you set.

This also applies to Salāt, and our overall Tarbiyyat. Children make connections between random things, if they see a pattern of behavior. It doesn't necessarily have to be correct, but if it makes sense to them they will believe it. For example, if children see that their parents are reading Salāt daily, but treating their in-laws with disrespect, or going to the masjid regularly, but lying to neighbors or coworkers about small things, what will they deduce?

They will assume that if Salāt and Jamā'at activities are not making you a good person, then what is the point of doing them? If we are saying one thing but doing another, we are living a life of hypocrisy and children growing up in this society are very aware. They see this as a reason to not follow in our footsteps. We must take a long hard look at ourselves and assess if we are transparent and open, if we are the type of person that we want our kids to grow up to become. And if we are not, then it is never too late to change. Children are very understanding and forgiving, and if we talk to them and show them that we too have faults, this teaches them to be self-aware and responsible, and they will benefit immensely from our honesty and candidness.

Marriage Comes First, Parenting Second

Allāh has created the family unit in such a beautiful way that it serves as the basis of a child's emotional and social development. When a child sees how their parents interact with each other, if they respect each other, if they are open and honest, if they are caring and loving, this teaches them how to behave in all of their relationships; with friends and peers and also when they grow up and get married. I cannot emphasize this point enough. If we are not setting a good example of married life, then not only will this distort their perception of marriage, but will greatly increase the likelihood of them having troubled marriages as well.

Boys learn how to behave from their fathers; how to be a good father, a provider, a caregiver. Girls learn from their mothers how to manage a household, how to nurture and take care of children and how to be a good wife. This is the way God intends it to be. Unfortunately, not every situation is ideal, you might be a single parent, be in a difficult situation with your spouse, or any other problem. I am not addressing those issues here. I am talking about if you have the opportunity to set a good example, then do it! Work hard on your marriage for the sake of your children. Spend quality time with your spouse to improve your relationship because you understand that this will not only create a happy home environment for your kids, but will teach them important life lessons.

Above all, prayer is our best tool. Daily we should be praying to Allāh to help us navigate through the confusing world of parenting and to protect our children from all kinds of harm. May Allāh protect us all.

Parenting your Devices

As mentioned before, technology is a big issue in parenting our children these days. Here are some helpful tips to monitoring and properly 'parenting' these devices in your homes.

Talk to your kids about the Rights and Responsibilities of using these devices; they are a 'want' not a need. The device is your property, and must be used according to your rules. Talk about time limits, and appropriate online behaviour.

Set Expectations of online behaviour; that it should be the same as their expected day to day behaviour. If it's not appropriate to say or do in person, then the same applies online. Periodically, review these expectations with them.

Get your kids to "Check- in" their devices before bed. Never leave anything with an internet connection in your child's room at night. They will misuse the device and could get into potentially harmful situations. At the very least, it will distract them and disturb their sleep.

Do random "Spot- Checks" to monitor usage and discuss potential problems. These should not serve as an opportunity to spy on your kids or to 'catch' them. Rather, to lovingly check that they are not involved in any inappropriate or dangerous online activities.

Be open and loving, not angry or suspicious. This way, if they have any issues or have gotten into any troubling situation, they know that they can come to you for help. If you are not clear about this then they will not confide in you.

Actions are Rewarded According to the Motives Behind them

By: Wajiha Saeed, Mississauga South

"Verily deeds are (judged) by the intentions and for every one is a reward, according to his intention." (Bukhārī)

The above mentioned saying is a beautiful Hadīth of the Holy Prophet[sa] as narrated by Hazrat 'Umar bin al -Khattāb[ra]. (Forty Gems of Beauty, pg 38).

This Hadīth teaches Muslims a very important lesson regarding intentions versus actions. As Muslims we should remember that Allāh sees what is in our hearts. The Holy Qur'ān states **"And whether you conceal what you say or make it public, He knows full well what is in *your* breasts. Does He Who has created *you* not know *it*? He is the Knower of all subtleties, the All-Aware."** (67: 14-15).

This Hadīth applies to any type of actions we do as human beings, whether it be for the sake of Allāh, family, friends or strangers. Some people may just do good deeds to gain worldly pleasures, or to show off to people that they are pious. While others may yet perform good deeds because that is a habit which they have developed as children; one such example is that of offering regular Salāt. However, the Holy Prophet[sa] has reminded us that if we do not have good intentions towards the deed we are performing that deed may be of no use. For example helping someone but expecting a reward in return shows that your intention is not honourable. We must remember that correct deeds are the ones done with a true intention and a sincere mind. Such a deed is the one that is deserving of a true reward from God. Also, one must realize that God does not benefit from our actions. One can say as many prayers as possible, fast thirty days every year, perform Hajj or Umra, but if the intentions of the person are not pure and righteous, one is merely wasting their time in putting up acts to impress the world.

Our beloved Imām, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (May Allāh be his Helper) explained the Divine attribute of Al-Hasib (which means the Reckoner) in his Friday Sermon on March 19, 2010. Huzoor[aa] quoted Surah Al Baqarah, verse 285: **'To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth; and whether you disclose what is in your minds or keep it hidden, Allāh will call you to account for it; then will He forgive whomsoever He pleases and punish whomsoever He pleases; and Allāh has the power to do all that He wills.'** (2:285). Huzoor[aa] said the faith of true believers is perfect when they keep an eye on their *nafs* (self) at all times and mould it according to the teachings that God has conveyed to the world through the personage of the Holy Prophet[sa]. God knows the state of hearts. (Friday Sermon, March 19, 2010)

Another example that comes to mind when reading this Hadīth is that of offering charity or paying Zakāt.

Some people may give Zakāt, feed the poor on 'Īd, and offer voluntary services; however, if all of these deeds are done to show people how good they are, and their true intentions are not to serve humanity and alleviate their suffering, then Allāh will not reward them. The Holy Qur'ān mentions, **"Their flesh reaches not Allāh, nor does their blood, but it is your righteousness that reaches Him. Thus has He subjected them to you, that you may glorify Allāh for His guiding you. And give glad tidings to those who do good."** (22.38) This verse clearly outlines us that Allāh is not in need of anyone's money or charity and neither does He stand to benefit from any of it. His eyes are only on the piety of the people performing the good deeds!

In his Friday Sermon of April 10, 2015, Huzoor[aa] said that Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmed, Khalīfatul-Masīh II[ra] narrated an incident which Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh I[ra] used to relate of an elder. The elder used to offer Salāt at a mosque for many years with the notion that people would admire and praise him. But due to past unsettled actions of his, God had put it in the hearts of people that they used to call him a hypocrite. One day he became conscious of the fact that he had been wasting his time praying at the mosque for so many years because no one ever called him righteous. Soon he realized that if he prayed for the sake of God, God would have been pleased with him. This idea struck him so powerfully that he went out into wilderness and offered Salāt in a most touching, modest and humble manner. Now that he was only praying for the sake of God, God put it in the heart of people that this elder was a pious man who was being disgraced needlessly. (Friday Sermon, April 10, 2015). This incident is a perfect example which demonstrates that Allāh indeed rewards one's real intentions.

The same principle can also be applied to volunteering for Jamā'at work. If one intends to serve Jamā'at, but does it only to show off to others or to self-serve; or even preaches to others but fails to follow the real teachings of Islām; these deeds will not win Allāh's pleasure for him. The people cannot see the motives behind actions but Allāh sees all. It is not possible to hide anything from Allāh. Allāh knows not only all the deeds but also the thoughts of all people. Allāh even knows what we know not!

In conclusion, Allāh is our creator, therefore since He already knows all beings, it is impossible to act in a false manner in front of him to gain His pleasure. We should all sincerely uncover all one's weaknesses, faults, wrongdoings and defects in one's faith to Allāh, and ask for His help and mercy. Surely Allāh is the most gracious and merciful.

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Undoubtedly a truthful deed is the one that has, behind it, a true and pure motive, for, the reward of deeds is measured out in terms of motives.

(Explanatory Note, Forty Gems of Beauty, pg 40)

True Freedom is in Submission to the Will of Allāh

By: Tahira Tahir, Vancouver, B.C.

Those of us living in the West have become greatly accustomed to hearing about the importance of freedom; in fact, since the world has now become a global village, the slogans of freedom are echoing far and wide. There is freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom to practice the religion of your choice, and essentially freedom to choose a life of your own desire. The only limitations placed on freedom are where it appears to interfere with the rights of others. Much of these freedoms are things we can all agree upon: freedom of religion, for example, is one which is greatly valued by Ahmadī Muslims, who face persecution in some countries.

I think it is wrong to assume that freedom necessarily implies a denial of religious responsibilities. Indeed, we can see that some of the freedoms championed in the world today are in harmony with the freedoms granted to us by our Benevolent Creator. However, there comes a point where freedom sometimes crosses the limit and this is where we, as Ahmadī Muslims in particular, need to exercise caution. We live in a world where values such as modesty are ridiculed and where there is free mixing of young men and women at parties and clubs, where alcohol flows like water , and a world where one picture posted on social media can traverse the entire globe in a matter of seconds for anyone to examine. This is where freedom comes with a price and that price is the cost of your faith.

In such cases, do we choose our faith over our freedom? And more importantly, why do we make this choice? It is natural for people (the young ones in particular) to be attracted to the glitz and glamour of the world, but all too often what escapes our understanding is the transient nature of all things in life. We as mortal human beings often forget our very mortality; we forget that no matter how much our Prada handbag cost, how many friends or likes we had on social media, all of this has to one day come to an end. When that time comes, we will not be weighed on a scale of popularity or on our dress size or on the amount of money we had in our checking account, but rather we will return to the One Being who created us in the first place and it is He who will judge us according to His rules.

True freedom lies in submitting ourselves to the Will of the One in whose Hand our very life and soul rests, and once this is accomplished, we will find that it brings us not suffering, but only true joy and contentment. It is this peace and contentment that too often escapes those who are blindly pursuing their unbridled freedoms. Many people who find themselves caught up in worldly endeavours either tread down a path of self-destruction or at some point later in life, begin to shun their material freedoms and choose a path of greater self-reflection and spirituality.

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh has reminded us in many instances that this life is only a temporary abode and that it is the hereafter that we should truly strive after. He has also assured us that we should not worry about the ridicule of others.

(Continued on page 22)

Derwishān of Qādiān

By: Saadia Malik, Mississauga West

The strength of a true believer truly becomes apparent when he/she displays the highest degree of patience and resilience in the face of an arduous trial. Allāh reminds us in the Holy Qur'ān in Surah Muhammad verse 32:

"And We will surely try you until We distinguish those among you who strive *for the cause of God* and those who are steadfast. And We will make known the facts about you." (47:32)

Accordingly, Allāh is well aware of which of His believers, when faced with a demanding situation in their lives, are able to demonstrate the utmost steadfastness, resolve and bow down before their Lord in humility and with an outpouring of deep prayers. We all may have come across such people in our lives, who overflow with love for Allāh and whose strength and faithfulness counteracts any suffering or misfortune, regardless of how grave it may be. These are the people whose spirits we must strive to embody. When my grandmother, Amtul Latif Khurshid Sāhiba, told me a detailed account of her father the respected Abdul Raheem Derwesh, I was overcome with admiration. My great grandfather, who amongst many other blessed members of the Jamā'at, had the honour of serving as *Derwesh* in Qādiān at the time of the partition; exhibited steadfastness, patience, and sacrifice for the sake of Allāh to an insurmountable degree. Accounts of their lives are awe-inspiring and serve as exceptional exemplars of the sincerest sacrifice for the sake of Allāh and the perpetuation of His most beloved Jamā'at.

Our thriving Jamā'at had its humble beginnings in the heart of Qādiān, India in the district of Gurdaspur. It is here, in 1889, that our beloved Promised Messiah and Mahdi, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (on whom be peace) would captivate countless hearts and fervently lay the foundation for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at.[1] Now firmly established in over 209 countries of the world by the grace of Allāh, millions of Ahmadīs' hearts beat to the rhythm of our obedience to the Promised Messiah[as], his beloved Khulafah, and his most cherished prophet, Muhammad[sa]; all of whom established their place on this earth to serve the most Gracious and ever Merciful Allāh Almighty.

Aside from being the birthplace of our beloved founder Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as], Qādiān is beautifully adorned with establishments, mosques, and countless memories of the remarkable history of the Jamā'at. A history, that was persistently contested by numerous forces, most notably the British Colonial Forces and the turbulent period of Sikh supremacy in India.[2] In the face of such strong opposition, steadfast and dutiful members of the Jamā'at led the way to ensure security and prosperity. What it truly means to be devoted to the Jamā'at and fulfill one's obligation to Allāh can truly be learned from studying the life of a Derwesh.

At the time of the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, there was political and social upheaval. Riots, violence, and intolerance had turned the atmosphere of Qādiān into one of a fear, uncertainty and insecurity. Millions of Muslims had been driven out of their homes and forced to flee.[3] It was at this time that our respected Khalīfatul-Masīh II, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad[ra] advised the Ahmadīs to undergo a '*hijrat*', or move to Pakistan. In Pakistan, the community would re-establish itself with the help of Allāh and be able to live in peace and freedom,

without fearing for their lives.

Migrating to another country and leaving behind one's family and possessions is most certainly not an easy task. However, Allāh's servants are on guard and ready to make the biggest sacrifices at any given time, including relocating to ensure religious fortification. Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Nooruddin[ra], who succeeded the Promised Messiah[as] as his first Khalīfa, was the personification of obedience to the Jamā'at. Upon the request of the Promised Messiah[as] he relocated from his hometown of Bhera, to Qādiān, in a heartbeat, without ever looking back.[4] Upon arriving to Qādiān, he stated, "*Allāh the Almighty moves in extraordinary ways; the thought of my native home never came to my mind again. After that, we just belonged to Qādiān.*"[5]

Qādiān had become home to such notable Jamā'at institutions such as Jāmi'a Ahmadiyya, Madrassah Ta'līmul Islām, Masjid-e-Aqsa, Masjid Mubarak, Bahishtī Maqbara, Dārud Diyāfat, and many more. Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II[ra] instructed specific members of the Jamā'at to stay back in Qādiān to preserve this most holy abode that had become known as the Jamā'at headquarters. On November 16, 1947, the last caravan of people had left Qādiān for Pakistan, and those who stayed behind, at the directive of their beloved Khalīfa, were 313 Ahmadīs, who pledged to remain in Qādiān and protect it with their lives.[6] At the time of the battle of Badr, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] similarly had an army of 313 noble Muslim warriors by his side.[7] Among these honourable men, who would make the ultimate devotion of life was, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad[ra], the son of the Promised Messiah[as], who was also in charge of the *Derwishān* in Qādiān and Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad Sāhib, grandson of the Promised Messiah[as]. These selfless, noble and honourable men made an insurmountable sacrifice for the cause of the Jamā'at. They parted ways with their loved ones and their beloved Khalīfa, and devoted their lives to protect Qādiān in order to safeguard the Jamā'at's imminent propagation.

In order to complete this *hijrat* (migration) from Qādiān to Rabwah, members of the Jamā'at had to undergo the extremely difficult task of travelling from India to Pakistan in very dangerous conditions. Referring to this difficult time, Hazrat Mirza Waseem Ahmad stated,

"The early days for all Derwishān were of great hardship and fear; although a true believer does not fear anything but times were highly uncertain in terms of safety and security. Due to the gravity of the political situation even the governmental sector kept a suspicious outlook. The Hindus and Sikhs who had left their homes in Pakistan and gone to India harboured severe animosity. Food was in limited supply."[8]

My grandmother, Amtul Latif Khurshid, narrated that during the time of this hijrat, some women were desperately trying to make their way to Pakistan. In order to get to a safe enough area to migrate they had to jump from rooftop to rooftop using wooden planks to secure their track, while avoiding gunshots and potential violence. My grandmother sadly recalled that one time the last of the women who was trying to escape via rooftops, did not make it across in time, may Allāh be pleased with her.

Food was scarce and security was not at all guaranteed, as Sikhs would always be monitoring the areas. Showers of bullets pouring from the rooftops were a common phenomenon. Sikhs of the area had confiscated houses and property that lawfully belonged to Ahmadīs. My great-grandfather owned a soda water shop, among other property, all of which were taken away from him. It was very difficult for the Derwishān to contact their families in Pakistan as letters were constantly monitored. Due to this, letters had to be sent to relatives or Jamā'at members in other parts of the world and then sent to family members in Pakistan. If sending letters was so difficult, one can only imagine how hard it was to obtain a VISA in order to visit family in Pakistan or vice versa.

Amidst these problematic living conditions and constant threats to their safety, the Derwishān exhib-

ited unmatched strength and resilience as they stood their ground in order to protect and preserve Qādiān, the first home of Ahmadiyyat.

A writer of the Jamā'at once wrote in memory of the Derwishān, *"They were the people who at their master's beck and call with their own hands put their minds to the deep sleep of death and with overwhelming passion exposed their lives to deadly danger."*[9]

The Derwishān protected the area, known as Ahmadiyya Chowk of Qādiān, for years and although many times came face to face with the possibility of death itself; they remained firm in their perpetual duty to protect Qādiān, as vowed to their beloved Khalifah. Allāh has promised that those who submit to Him completely and spend their lives in the way of Allāh, they will be blessed and rewarded in ways that we cannot even imagine. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān, "**Nay, whoever submits himself completely to Allāh, and is the doer of good, shall have his reward with his Lord. No fear shall come upon such, neither shall they grieve.**" (2:113)

Allāh always rewards the patience and steadfastness of His servants and so gradually, in the early 1950's, conditions in Qādiān had improved. It became a bit easier for the families of the Derwishān to visit them on occasion. My grandmother recalled how it was still rather challenging to obtain a VISA and get permission to cross the border. She narrated that once upon learning that her father had become ill, she obtained a VISA with some difficulty and embarked upon the difficult journey of travelling to Qādiān to visit her father, respected Abdul Raheem Derwesh. She was accompanied by her young son and was covered in a burqa from head to toe. My great grandfather was ecstatic to be reunited with his loved ones after years. He ran from road to road introducing everyone to his daughter and grandson. This brief glimmer of happiness and familiarity had to end soon, as my grandmother had to head back to Rabwah, Pakistan.

Relocating the Jamā'at to Rabwah, Pakistan was no easy task. However, Allāh blesses His beloved Jamā'at regardless of where they may be and especially after they are tested with difficult phases. On September 20th, 1948 the foundation stone was laid for the new town of Rabwah, which would become the prosperous World Headquarters of the Movement.[10] It was not long before Rabwah established into the thriving and consecrated second home of the Jamā'at by the grace of Allāh. Qādiān's light gleamed brightly throughout Rabwah, as the Jamā'at established houses, schools, mosques and various organizations to emulate Qādiān. Among these were, Nusrat Jahān College, Ta'līmul Islām College, Bahishti Maqbarah and many more.

In 1979, my great-grandfather, Abdul Raheem Derwesh, upon receiving his VISA, went to Rabwah to visit his family. In Rabwah, he sadly passed away, after spending his entire life in the way of Allāh and for the protection of the Jamā'at, may Allāh be pleased with him and accept his sacrifices. His wish of being buried in Qādiān's Bahishti Maqbarah was fulfilled by his family. He was laid to rest in the home of our beloved Promised Messiah[as], a home that he devoted his life to protect. My grandmother, her siblings and families of the other Derwishān went on to receive excellent education in Rabwah while serving the Jamā'at to the best of their God-given abilities.

One Derwesh once said, on behalf of all the Derwishān,

"Let no one think that we 'Derwesh' are living in separation from our emotions of love and sense of affection; not at all. We have learnt the art of establishing a separate world. In this new and strange world, our 'Derwesh' brotherhood is everything to us. In this small world, we have everything that we desire for. When we share each other's pain and suffering and participate in each other's joys, we feel so calm and peaceful, the like of which is difficult to find in the world."[11]

The patience and prayers of those who sacrifice in the name of Allāh are never wasted. Allāh remembers

each struggle, each tear shed in anguish and each prayer that His beloved servant cries out in the dark of the night. Those tears and those prayers go on to provide innumerable blessings for the Derwishān, their families and the Jamā'at. Generations upon generations of the families of the Derwishān of Qādiān have journeyed to the corners of the earth, where they live modestly, devoted to the Jamā'at, mankind and the pleasure of Allāh. What could be better in Allāh's eyes than a life lived in devotion to Allāh and His truest Jamā'at. May Allāh enable us to embody the virtues of sacrifice, patience and steadfastness that were embodied by each and every Derwesh of Qādiān. I hope and pray that we may all learn a great deal from the lives of the Derwishān and may we have the strength to endure such hardships when they may cross our paths, and exhibit such strength and endurance, as did our beloved and valiant Derwishān. I pray that may Allāh allow us to develop such a deep and eternal love for Khilāfat and the Jamā'at that we should yearn for an opportunity to sacrifice that which we love most. May we all learn to exemplify courage, strength and devotion and become protectors or Derwishān of our beloved Jamā'at.

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I'm Grateful to be Canadian

By: Alia Mazhar, Toronto

Today more than ever before, I am grateful to be Canadian. In light of the massacre in Québec City, I am grateful for the outpour of love and acceptance that I have received not only from my friends but everyone around me. I am grateful for the continuing messages of peace, safety, and love that I am receiving from everyone around me.

I am grateful that no one has taken to provide any justifications (mentally ill, lone wolf, isolated incident, etc.) for the actions of those individuals, because in this case there are no justifications. Innocent people lost their lives -- and there is no explanation in the world that can justify that. I am grateful that those in places of power are recognizing this as an act of terrorism and have taken appropriate measures to ensure that anyone who feels targeted are reminded that they are safe, they are loved, they are welcomed, and that they belong here.

I am grateful that the suffering of those left behind has not been undermined. Their grieving is understood because we all understand that no one deserves to lose their loved ones in such a way.

I am grateful that today I live in a country that uses diversity as its strength, that creates bridges instead of walls, that champions inclusion rather than isolation.

I am grateful that I live in Canada

As Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, (May Allāh have mercy on him) once said, "May the whole world become Canada and Canada the whole world."

We have the Basic Necessities of Life but do we have Peace of Mind?

By: Maria Khan, Edmonton West

According to a Pew Research Centre survey[1], the number of luxuries people claim to be necessities has multiplied over the years. As civilization continues, there are newfound wants, desires and needs. Evidently, the more money one has, the more things one needs[1], begging the question does money actually buy happiness? One study found that on average, richer countries are in fact happier, but only up to a certain point-. In an address on June 26, 2010, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa] noted: **"The poor think the rich have a peace of mind and are content. Upon closer analysis however, we see that the rich are just as restless and distressed; and whosoever is restless and distressed cannot be deemed to be in a peaceful state. Peace of mind is not in the bedazzlement of this world, or in intoxicants, it is only to be found in turning to God".**[3] Research aligns with this notion as data on happiness and religious belief demonstrates religious people, on average are happier than non-religious people, and that adults who attended religious services once a week or more often were more likely to report feeling "very happy" than those who attended seldom or never[4]. This aforementioned peace of mind may be due to several reasons; among them, sincere prayers, acting with absolute justice, and practicing modesty.

Firstly, peace of mind may be achieved through sincere supplications. The Promised Messiah[as] noted: **"He who supplicates to God at the time of difficulty and distress and seeks the resolution of his difficulties from Him achieves satisfaction.... If God Almighty so wills, a sincere and righteous person in the midst of his distress achieves such delight after supplication which an emperor cannot enjoy on the imperial throne".**[5] In this passage, the Promised Messiah[as] points out that the average person who is sincere and righteous in their supplications can achieve such a high level of contentment that it is incomparable with worldly wealth.

Secondly, peace of mind is achieved through absolute justice. In his book, *World Crisis and the Pathway to Peace*, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aa] said that true justice requires that sentiments and religious practices of all people be honoured. He stressed that this is the way in which peace of mind will be kept intact. He further noted that when an individual's peace of mind is disturbed, societal peace is affected.[6]

Thirdly, the Holy Qur'ān informs us that peace of mind may further be achieved through modesty. Allāh states in the Holy Qur'ān: **"O Prophet! tell thy wives and thy daughters, and the women of the believers, that they should pull down upon them of their outer cloaks from their heads over their faces. That is more likely that they may thus be recognized and not molested. And Allāh is Most Forgiving, Merciful."** (33:60) The practice of purdah deemphasizes the physical appearance of women as marks of self-esteem or achievement.[7] A Muslim woman practicing modesty is focusing her efforts on the development of her intellect, character and abilities over her looks. Thus, her peace of mind is subsequently attained through satisfying Allāh's commandment and ensuring her worth is not reduced to her physical appearance.

Overall, Islām emphasizes the development of traits, such as integrity, loyalty and faithfulness, and

practices, such as praying, acting justly and modestly that create peace of mind. It is only through the abandonment of materialistic attachments and a focus on our spiritual and moral selves that we achieve true contentment. May Allāh enable all Ahmadī Muslim women to follow the path of the righteous to attain Allāh Almighty's pleasure and gain peace of mind (Amīn).

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(Continued from page 4 - Writings of the Promised Messiah[as])

been of much greater benefit if it had fallen over cultivated fields. Thereupon God Almighty deprived him of all holiness. He became very sorrowful and sought help from another holy person and was told in the end that he had offended God because of his criticism. [Malfūẓāt, vol. VI, p. 57]

Arrogance is of many types. It sometimes emerges through the eye when a person looks contemptuously upon another deeming himself his superior. Sometimes it emerges through the tongue, or through the head, or through hands and feet. In short, there are many sources of arrogance and a believer should avoid all of them. He should take care that no one of his limbs should smell of arrogance or manifest it in any way. The Sufis have said that there are many types of low qualities inside a person, like evil spirits, and they continue to be expelled till the last of them is left which is arrogance. It can be expelled only by Divine grace, which is won through sincere striving and supplications. Many persons deem themselves humble but suffer from some type of arrogance. Therefore, one must seek to avoid even the subtlest types of arrogance, which are generated sometimes by wealth, when a wealthy one deems others misers who cannot be his equals; sometimes arrogance is generated by family and caste, when a person deems himself of high caste and looks down upon others as of low caste.... Sometimes arrogance is generated by learning. A person makes a mistake in speaking and an arrogant one immediately seizes upon his mistake and shouts that he cannot utter a single word right. In short, there are diverse types of arrogance and all of them deprive a person of virtue and stand in the way of his beneficence towards his fellow beings. All of them must be shunned. But this calls for a type of death. So long as a person does not accept such a death Divine blessing does not descend upon him nor does God become responsible for him. [Malfūzāt, vol. VI, pp. 401-403]

Poetry

One God

By: Aaima Noor, Winnipeg Jamā'at

There is only one God
And Allāh is the One
There is only one God
And He has neither a partner nor a son

He is the Light
That is our spiritual guidance
In front of Him,
The entire world lightens

He is the Gracious, the Merciful
He keeps Satan away
We are all His creations,
He is brighter than the light of day

He created us all,
and to Him we shall return,
He is amazing beyond words,
And from Him, we will all learn

We are all His servants
And He is our Master
We are all plants
And He is our sun and water

Because of Him,
We bloom every day
And to show our thanks
We try to be closer to Him in every way

Allāh is the one God
In our hearts, He is the core,
Because when we have Allāh
We don't need anything more

There is only one God
Allāh Is the One
There is only one God
And towards Him do I run.

"My father, my blessing!"

By: Dr. Rabiya Rana, Surrey South

Every night, when I count my blessings,
You are the one, top of the list,
You are my saviour, my guardian angel,
Not saying it all; I can never resist,
Like a shining star, a beacon in my life,
The soul you are, I cannot comprehend,
Being this far away, I can only pray,
For your healthy life and happiness to not end,
Cannot thank you enough,
For the times too tough,
You are patient and loving,
Always trusting and forgiving,
Giving me advice, guidance and comfort,
Hours and hours, the time you spend,
Cannot fully express, what it means to me,
Your affection and kindness, your love never ends!
All my achievements and the stars I have got,
They are what your efforts and prayers have brought,
Wherever in the world I can ever be,
I always feel your praise enlightening me,
You are the only best friend I have ever had,
Nothing in my life could make me more glad,
This friendship will always remain closest to my heart,
You lift me up, no matter oceans apart!
You are the smile behind my smile,
There is nothing in this world that you could not give,
You are my father, my laughter, my joy,
You are my pride, the reason I live . . . .

Mental Health Concerns and Their Effects on Society

By: Dr. Ayesha Intsar Mohar, Calgary Taradale

Mental health concerns are a significant dilemma of the modern world and are continually on the rise. Nearly 50% of adults experience a mental illness at some point in their lives. More than half of these people experience moderate to severe symptoms. In fact, 4 of the 10 leading causes of disability among people aged 5 and older are mental health disorders, with depression being the number one cause of all illnesses that cause disability. Despite this high prevalence of mental illness, only about 20% of people who have a mental illness receive professional help.

Some of the most common contributing factors might be the inability of most people to keep up with the rapid pace of the current age along with inability to cope with the resultant stress and anxiety which it generates. People are working day and night to maintain a certain standard of living to survive in the modern competitive era. The concept of exclusive family gatherings on dinner table and discussions pertaining to daily routines has almost vanished. Instead everybody is in a rush to upgrade the living standard and luxuries of life in an attempt to acquire contentment and satisfaction. Tablets and i-pads have replaced interpersonal communication. Junk foods and ready-made take away meals have taken the place of nutritious homemade food. In short, the developments and advancements of the time although being beneficial in certain ways, have contributed vastly to the plight of mental health and are one of the main factors responsible for the rising mental health concerns for the community.

The impacts of this problem on the community and the society are huge. A healthy mind leads to a healthy body, which in turn leads to a more productive contributing member for the society. Poor state of mental health has social, emotional and physical impacts on the lives of individuals and might lead to chronic medical problems. This also has resulted in a rise in the incidence of substance abuse in younger generation and also a rise in the incidence of suicide in the communities. The stigma attached with the diagnosis of a mental problem has also been one of the prime reasons for the under-reporting of these conditions in the early stages of the disease. Once it is presented to physicians, it has progressed significantly and becoming chronic and thus more difficult to treat and manage. For the society to grow, it is vital to take necessary measures in order to put a hold on it and in turn control this rapidly aggravating dilemma to allow the nation to prosper and progress.

Some strategies can be employed to lower the incidence of mental health concerns in the community and each and every individual has to play their own specific role in this context. The first and foremost thing is to pay attention to the warning signs if they develop and to seek early medical help in this regard.

(Continued on page 22)

Controlling a mental illness early during its course makes its long term control much easier. If put on medication, one should be compliant and regular in follow ups. Eating a healthy balanced diet is good for one's mental and physical health. If one is on a limited diet or eats a lot of unhealthy food it can make the mental health worse. Balanced diet can help make one less likely to become unwell and help one stay at a healthy body weight. Some mental illnesses can get worse if we don't have certain nutrients in our diet. One example is that a low level of vitamin B is linked to depression. Moderate exercise can help to improve the mood and how one feels generally. It can also help to make us feel better about ourselves. Problems with sleep can affect how one feels physically and mentally. If there are regular sleeping problems, then your family doctor can be contacted. Talking to people about our problems can be useful. There are a variety of services offering telephone, email or instant messaging chat and these are available in the community. Try not to get too stressed. A lot of things in life can cause stress which can impact on mental health. Sometimes stress cannot be avoided. One should always aim at ways to limit the effects of stress. If required , services like anger control management, marital counseling and alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs can be employed as all these have been devised as a contributory tool toward amelioration of the quality of mental health in the existing world.

Thus to become productive members of our society, it is our responsibility to take care of not only our physical health but also our mental health as it in fact is much more important. Healthy minds lead to healthy bodies, which in turn lead to a strong and powerful society which progresses by leaps and bounds. The stigma associated with having a mental health problem is a story of the past now. We should be much more open to the existence of such problems in the community and should play our role towards its eradication by showing our support and understanding .

(Continued from page 13 - True Freedom is in Submission to the Will of Allāh)

As Allāh says:

"The life of this world is made *to appear* attractive to those who disbelieve; and they scoff at those who believe. But those who fear *God* shall be above them on the Day of Resurrection; and Allāh bestows *His gifts* on whomsoever He pleases without reckoning." (2:213)

If we keep the commands and promises of Allāh in mind at all times, we will automatically refrain from following practices in the name of freedom that are detrimental to our spiritual and very often, our physical and emotional well-being.

The freedoms we choose for ourselves should not come with pitfalls; rather, they should be those freedoms that elevate us to greater heights of spirituality and success. If we start pursuing freedom that is contained within the limitations placed upon us by Allāh, we will find that all aspects of our life will be blessed doubly. This life that we have been given is a gift to us by a very Loving, Kind and Merciful God and it is to Him that we shall return, so let us make it count and be among those who are granted true peace and freedom on the Day when we meet Him, Amīn!

Reports of Local Events

The Holy Qur'ān Exhibition — University of Calgary

Report prepared by: Ishā'at Team Lajna McKnight

By the Grace of Allāh, Calgary McKnight Jamā'at organized a Holy Qur'ān Exhibition with the cooperation of Chestermere Jamā'at at the University of Calgary on February 2, 2017 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Various posters, Jamā'at books, and copies of Holy Qur'ān with translations in multiple languages were displayed. Additionally, there was a table setup with mehndi, scarves and candies.

There were around 50 to 100 people who stopped at the tables for questions and discussions. Approximately 500 to 600 people passed by the posters and the tables and got exposure to the message of Islām and Ahmadiyyat. Many people, men and women, stopped by to look at the posters, to ask questions, and to have discussions on topics such as women's rights in Islām, difference between the Promised Messiah[as] and Jesus Christ[as], the arrival of the Promised Messiah[as], and introduction to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at.

Some visitors also took books and flyers. Also, 10 scarves were given; around 25 ladies got mehndi applied to their hands. Visitors of mehndi and scarves table were also greeted with free candies and care.

Holy Qur'ān Exhibition pictures at University of Calgary

Jalsa Musleh Mau'ūd—Vancouver, British Columbia

By the Grace of Allāh, Jalsa Musleh Mau'ūd[ra] took place on February 20, 2017 at Baitur Rehman Mosque in Vancouver, BC, and was an overall success. The program had multiple informative speeches and presentations.

After that the significance of the prophecy of the Promised Messiah[as] which was announced on February 20, 1886 was explained, a couple of presentations were delivered. A quiz followed which was enjoyed by all members. Final speech was delivered by Regional Sadr Sāhiba regarding the advice of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ūd[ra] to mothers of future generations.

Holy Qur'ān Exhibition, Vaughan

By the grace of Allāh, on February 26, 2017, five Majālis took part in a Holy Qur'ān Exhibition at Vellore Village community center located in the City of Vaughan. Altogether 8 stalls were setup for this purpose, including a stall for trying on a hijāb. Various posters were also displayed on the topics of "Freedom of religion" and "Violence and terrorism". Approximately, 30 visitors came by and visited the different areas of the exhibition including the Honourable Councillor Marilyn Iafrate, Honourable Regional Councillor Michael Di Biase and Honourable Regional Councillor Gino Rosati. Some guests subscribed to a year's free issue of Review of Religion – also, 5 books and many pamphlets were handed out as gifts.

Holy Qur'ān Exhibition held in the City of Vaughan

Interfaith Symposium, Edmonton

On March 9, 2017 over 130 women gathered in Edmonton's Baitul-Hadi mosque to engage in thoughtful discourse about the role of religion in the 21st century. The event was organized and hosted by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Association Edmonton East and Edmonton West. By the Grace of Allāh, the event had a full house with 54 Lajna members and 91 guests in attendance.

An array of exhibits were displayed on Judaism, Hinduism and Islāmic display, which ascertained discussions amongst guests on Hijab, role of women in Mosque/Community, education of Muslim women, Muslim persecution, Islāmic stance on current world issues, and other such topics. This exchange of dialogue lead to peeked interest of guests walking away with Islāmic literature including the Holy Qur'ān, *Women in Islām*, *Islām's Response to Contemporary Issues*, *Life of Muhammad*[sa], *Our Teachings* and various pamphlets.

For the Interfaith program, the panel of speakers included Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, and Islām, sharing their perspectives. Across faith groups, messages of compassion, love, peace, justice, and service to humanity were conveyed. All speakers also touched upon the current climate of religious intolerance. Reverend Karen Bridges noted news stories provide one perspective of those different to us, but respectful interactions provide several. Bena Pattni discussed the only way to remove fear and hate of 'the others' is through creating a united community of women. Trudianne Dolman agreed that we live in difficult times, but kindness towards others, especially those new to us, is required as we

were all once strangers. The moderator of the evening, Muneeba Mirza, concluded that a positive understanding of each other's faith will promote acceptance and compassion for one another. Muslim speaker, Samina Mian, acknowledged that it is through religion that we receive the guidance to not only establish inner peace within ourselves but establish peace with those around us.

In addition to responding to the current state of affairs, Samina Mian mentioned that the discussions that took place during the symposium filled her with hope about the future. She acknowledged that Ahmadī Muslims belong to a minority sect of Islām and are often persecuted in many areas of the world. Thus, her com-munity especially recognizes, understands, and champions the need for respectful dialogue, peace and love for one another. She concluded with a quote of His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (may Allāh be his Helper):

"If we truly want peace in our time then we must act with justice. We must value equality and fairnests. As the Prophet of Islām (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) so beautifully stated, we must love for others what we love for ourselves. We must pursue the rights of others with the same zeal and determination that we pursue our own rights."

In order for any event to be successful, the contributions and efforts of volunteers are essential. By the Grace of Allāh, many Lajna members stepped forward by supporting and publicizing this event, undertaking Tablīgh efforts.

Women's Day Celebration – Calgary McKnight

By the grace of Allāh the Almighty, Calgary McKnight held a Tablīgh Event, regarding 'Women in Islām' in the community to celebrate International Women's Day. Our exhibition began was held at the Village Square Leisure Centre Calgary Public Library. Volunteer included six Lajna, and three Nāsirāt.

We had a wonderful turnout of the public, as there was a vast number of individuals who came to the booth, stopping to take a look at what we were offering, read the trifolds and posters as well as ask multiple questions about our outlook on faith and insight into our religion and our choice to practice it. Our event also had a henna stall in order to provide attraction to individuals whilst also embracing the culture of celebrating women on this day. Further, we had a 'try on a hijāb' section to our event as well, and we handed out candy and bangles again to reunite women through culture and what makes us unique. Some visitors took pamphlets with them, and books "Women in Islām", and "Life of Muhammad". Overall our goal of spreading information about Women in Islām was accomplished.

Women's day celebration—Calgary

Nāsirāt Corner

My Experience as a member of Nāsirāt-ul Ahmadiyya

By: Arfa Rana, Kitchener-Waterloo

I was a quiet, 7 years old kid when I walked into my first Nāsirāt class with my older sister in Mississauga East. As I walked into the small, cozy apartment, I took in all the kind, smiling faces of the girls around me, and they all stared back at me in curiosity. Little did I know, I would grow up with these girls to be my best friends and become even more - sisters. I am not a Nāsira anymore; I have joined Lajna. But, I write this article to all the girls who are in Nāsirāt and the mothers of the Nāsirāt to share with you how being a Nāsira changed my life.

In my first few classes as a Nāsirāt I was quiet and only participated when my Nāsirāt teacher told me to. As I grew more and more confident with my teachers and classmates during Nāsirāt class, I began to discover my leadership qualities which I not only portrayed during our weekly sessions during Nāsirāt class, but at school too. As I said before, when I was 7-years old, I was a quiet girl, but, my mother gave me a push that same year, by making me participate in our local Ijtimā'. By age 11, I began writing my own speeches and participating in speech competitions during the Ijtimā' competitions and at school. My presentations at school improved, my teachers loved to hear me speak publicly and helped me further by finding public speaking competitions. My confidence skyrocketed; I am absolutely comfortable speaking in huge gatherings and because of this I became one of the assembly leaders at school too. As the years passed by, my speeches improved and I discovered my love for poetry and short stories. Is it not amazing to think: this all began with one class. Since my first day in Nāsirāt class, I have won first place twice at Nationals for French speech. I have been published nationally as a poet, a writer. And just a few months ago, I was awarded the "Nāsirāt of the Year 2016" award, all by the grace of Allāh, the support from my mother, and from my encouraging Nāsirāt teachers. This year, I am planning on taking another challenge by starting a school newspaper called "The Edge".

I want Nāsirāt to know that, you are all leaders. And leaders are confident, they trust their intuition, they believe in themselves. So, whatever your dreams are, you can achieve them because you have support from Nāsirāt class, your family members, the Jamā'at, and your friends… All you need to do now is take that risk.

My Experience With Khilāfat

By: Amatur Rahman, Ottawa West

When Huzoor[aa] came to Ottawa for a visit, I wanted to ask him a lot of questions. But the biggest surprise came when he stopped in front of where I was standing with the Nāsirāt. At first I thought it was just a light shining in front of us because it was dark outside. But then I looked down and saw his coat.

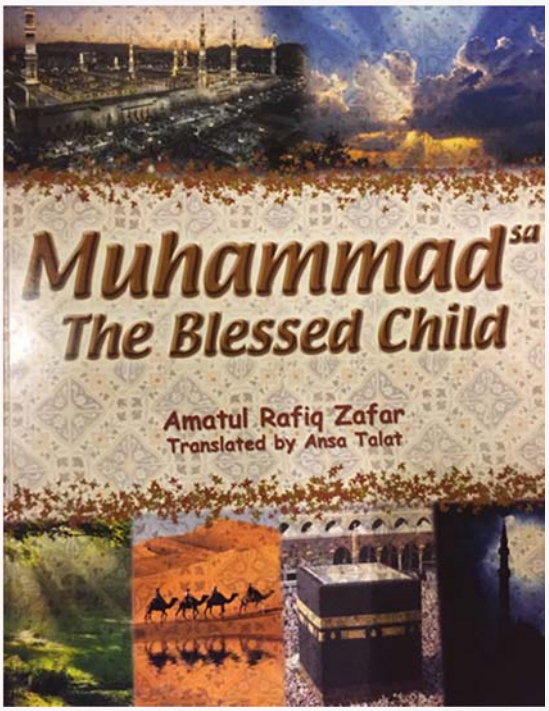
Suddenly it was like someone had crushed my vocal cords. I stood there in shock not saying a word. (I don't usually express my feelings with words on the outside but on the inside I was freaking out with nervousness.)

Every time I went to the masjid and helped the Lajna with cleanliness in the food department I felt proud of myself and useful for being able to help with such a

big duty on such a special occasion. All of Huzoor's sermons about how Nāsirāt and Lajna should aim to reach their full potential really inspired me to try my very best in all areas of education. My inspiration was doubled at the time of our Mulāqāt. Before that I had always thought that being visually impaired got in the way of everything I wanted to do in my life. But after our Mulāqāt I felt that being visually impaired didn't matter anymore and that nothing could stand in my way of getting through life except if God willed it. Also that by Allāh's Grace I would be able to eventually see completely again. Originally I was going to ask him to pray for me to be able to figure out my education plan. But after that meeting with Huzoor[aa] I felt like I had it all figured out.

Book Review

Book: Muhammad[sa], The Blessed Child
Written by: Amtul Rafiq Zafar
Translated by: Ansa Talat



This story was originally presented by Amtul Rafiq Zafar Sāhiba on a Nāsirāt Ijtimā' in 2008. It contains various incidents from the blessed childhood of our Holy Prophet[sa]. It has been compiled in a booklet and has been translated into English. The book includes both the English and the Urdu versions of this speech.

It is beautifully written and illustrated to make it interesting and informative so that children can easily read it and understand the wonderful stories about Hadrat Muhammad's [sa] childhood.

Parents should read this book with their children because it has very sacred incidents from Holy Prophet's[sa] childhood that some people might not have heard of before. Be assured that your children will love reading this book.

Some of the topics included in this book are:

Birth of the Holy Prophet[sa]
Parents of the Holy Prophet[sa]
The Holy Prophet's[sa] good nature and love for Allāh
The Holy Prophet's[sa] hatred for worshipping idols
and much more!

This book is definitely a must read for all children!!

My Beautiful Memories during Huzoor's Visit to Canada

By: Adan Raees, Edmonton West

On November 12th 2016, I got to sit with Huzoor (May Allāh be his helper) twice. In the evening, I attended the Waqf Nau class with Huzoor[aa]. I could not believe that I was seeing Huzoor in front of me. I always see him on MTA, but this time I got to see him live. Secondly, I got to sit with Huzoor on my Amīn ceremony. I am thankful to Allāh that He gave me the chance to have my Amīn with our beloved Imam. I can't explain my feelings. I was very happy. We are so blessed to have Huzoor (May Allāh be his helper) as our spiritual guide.

Blessed moments of Waqf Nau Class

By: Salma Basharat (age: 8 years), Edmonton West

This year I turned 8 so I was fortunate to attend a Waqf Nau class with Huzoor[aa]. When Huzoor[aa] came in the mosque I felt happy and excited, but I was also nervous. But when I saw Huzoor[aa], his holiness, was very nice. Huzoor made me very happy. A smile came on everyone's face. I felt brave to be with Huzoor, he made my courage strong. I was so surprised to see all the love in Huzoor's heart. Huzoor[aa] made my heart filled with joy and happiness. I am so glad to have attended the class with Huzoor (may Allāh be his helper).

My Experience

By: Izma Farhat, (age: 10 years), Edmonton West

When my family went to meet Huzoor[aa] for a Mulāqāt, we sat down on the big chairs and my Grandpa talked about my Grandma and his father that they both have passed away. I was little shy meeting Huzoor[aa]. Huzoor[aa] gave me chocolate and a pen and my sisters also got gifts. I thanked him, I also told Huzoor[aa] that I am 10 years old and in grade 5. At that Huzoor[aa] said, "Really, you look way younger than your age". Because of shortage of time we had to leave, and it was the next family's turn. We gave Huzoor honey and said goodbye.

Class with Huzoor[aa]

By: Kashifa Maham Malik (age: 8 years), Edmonton West

I want to share my experience at a Waqf Nau class with Huzoor[aa] in Calgary. I felt blessed but a little nervous too. It was more of a Question and Answer session. I liked all the questions that the Waqifate Nau girls were asking. I did not know what to ask so I did not ask any. I hope we have another class with Huzoor soon. May Allāh the Almighty Bless our Beloved Huzoor[aa] with a long, happy, and healthy life. Amīn!

When I Met Huzoor[aa]

By: Labika Bajwa (age: 7 years), Edmonton West

When Huzoor[aa] came to Canada and I met him, I felt excited and happy. I prayed for him; it was awesome and fun. I asked him to pray for my family. I hoped and prayed that Huzoor[aa] has a good new year. I asked him to pray for my success in the future so that I can become an engineer. I also enjoyed the Jalsa and Huzoor's speeches.

Word Search:
Attributes of Allāh

Submitted by: Arifa Lubna, Vaughan South

H I M E X H T H E G R A C I O U S I S N C Y M Z T
L Y K D V B T K O U G Z D M Y U M V Z O R C Z G N
D T H E L I G H T R W T X V I M A L K E F Z A Y E
T H E M I G H T Y Q N H W R I E L Y W A L D W O I
H R W Z T F L M R M B V C V G X O K T R A F A S C
E C A U I V T H E P O W E R F U L U F M R E N L I
X T H E M E R C I F U L L H P W X A Q E Y Q I P F
H P E V L U G O L R V J K N Z J G G N B I P E K F
Y F S L B T D C F X B Q Z O C Z H O M P P S L L U
R E D I V O R P E H T P T H E F I N D E R G B J S
N O P Y T F T J Q Z O J B E M H F K Q N H E A L E
E W P T N H H G I H E H T U S R E K A M E H T T H
H N Q N T H E H E A L E R A W C A L B O W Z I H T
S J O X A R R P B L V N F Q Y W E O B J H F U E A
E M X E B M U F R G L E Y L S U M M U O W B Q G S
Q H P M H V L T U O H O F T D L G K P Z N O E R A
T W Z M P T E Q S T T R S T H L K O S U Q E E E Q
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C C F J X T V P V Y L Y I T N D C R M W C Z W Y J
P I Y N E T N E T O P I N M O E H T E I E L J P R
K A C Y Z H D I V W F D L U S R A H Z A P E B U D
M D T G B H T I K J T T H C J Z T E N N T M H I K
P C I P P Z N J O S V T H E E X A L T E D O A Z M
O T E N W G L L M O N N G T J D J D M Q K O R S U

THE LORD OF ALL THE WORLDS
THE GRACIOUS
THE MERCIFUL
THE PROTECTOR
THE MIGHTY
THE EXALTED
THE CREATOR
THE MAKER
THE FASHIONER
THE PROVIDER
THE JUST
THE GREAT
THE HIGH
THE NOBLE
THE WISE
THE LOVING
THE POWERFUL
THE FINDER
THE ONE
THE OMNIPOTENT
THE RULER
THE EQUITABLE
THE LIGHT
THE HEALER
THE SUFFICIENT